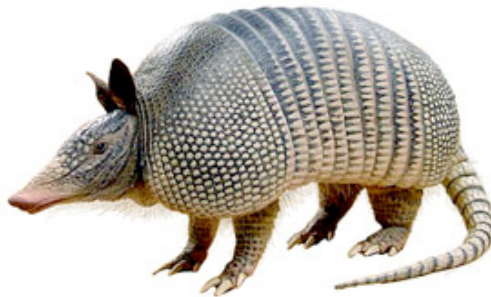


**A Review of Aardvark Bloomingdale's Historical Research:
Distance Learning vs. the Dual Coding Theory**

**by Mergatroid the Armadillo
under the direction of his handler, Charlie Dean**



One of my human handlers asked me to comment on Aardvark Bloomingdale's recent historical research, “Distance Learning vs. the Dual Coding Theory.” So with minimal guidance from my handler, here is my work:

Problem and Purpose

The **problem** that Aardvark spotlights is that teachers are not adequately considering the underpinnings of the Dual Coding Theory, Noam Chomsky's language theory, and other well accepted schools of thought when building their lesson plans. Using PowerPoint and other such NetGen toys (classroom props) too often force students to attempt to decipher two verbal sources simultaneously or two visual sources simultaneously.

The **purpose** was to discourage the use of students as commodities, and to encourage the leveraging of the student's time instead of the teacher's, and to take a hard look at the technology that would be better used another way, or not at all. The **purpose** is to encourage teachers to use classroom props in such a way as to present students with a verbal source and a visual source simultaneously, and NOT two verbal sources simultaneously or two visual sources simultaneously. The **purpose** is to improve the effectiveness of teaching methods and to encourage further study in this area.

Aardvark rambles in an antidotal way. His is not as clear-cut as some reviews that neatly set out the questions, answers, facts, and rationale. The subject matter though does not lend itself that sort of review. I found the facts and rationale difficult to follow, but logically set out.

Hypothesis

The **hypothesis** is that teaching techniques in distance learning classes frequently do not comport with the underpinnings of the Dual Coding Theory, Noam Chomsky's language theory, and other well accepted schools of thought. (Essentially the same as the “problem” above.) Many teaching techniques lack reasonable facts and argument that would tend to show that the teaching techniques make the best use of the student's time

and effort. The student's time, not the teacher's, should be the fulcrum on which time is leveraged.

A **positive hypothesis** is that certain physical activities and variations lead to learning in an unrandom way and teachers should use this in their lesson plans to their students' advantage. A **negative hypothesis** is that teachers should not use methods and formats to exploit the students' time to save the teachers' time. Such leveraging of the teacher's time is an extremely expensive process on the student.

The Value of Time to a Student

Leveraging one's time at the expense of another's time was a new concept for me. I went out on a limb (Quite difficult for an armadillo.) and marshaled a little information on the value of time to a student.

A student's time is a valuable commodity. Even though a student cannot realistically claim that his time is his "stock in trade" [Abraham Lincoln] with respect to being a student it still has value to him. Time is not as fungible as currency. "Time is money." -- "Work while it is called today, for you know not how much you will be hindered tomorrow. One today is worth two tomorrow's; never leave that till tomorrow which you can do today." -- "You may delay, but time will not." -- "You may delay, but time will not, and lost time is never found again." -- "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. **Involve** me and I learn." [Benjamin Franklin] Hopefully "involvement" would mean to influence or affect in a manner that enhances learning efficiently.

After this research I can more easily appreciate the "problem" that Aardvark sets out.

Gathering and Analyzing Data

I find no problem with authenticity or trustworthiness of any source. I do not question the veracity of the sources that Aardvark uses, though I find difficulty distinguishing **Primary Sources** from **Secondary Sources**. I do not believe any educated animal, or human, would question Noam Chomsky being the "father of linguistics" and a Primary Source of information in the field, yet I would not call him an "eyewitness." All the sources relate the testimony and participation of others to an extent and parts of any source could be called Secondary Sources. I do not find the types of sources, or even a source of mixed-types of sources, to be an impediment to credibility here.

I do not see any reasonable **External Criticism**, as the sources are fairly contemporary except for Karl Marx (1847) and it was used as "bibliography" and not "references." I consider the sources (writers) to be true "masters of the arts." [Hank Williams, Sr.]

As far as **Internal Criticism**, it is hard to say the authors were not "un-biased" and "un-antagonistic" as these traits seem to be qualifications or at least status symbols for so many "masters." I find no reasonable challenge to the sources in this regard. The sources used have been around long enough to be challenged by other "masters." The concept of analogizing Learning and Fractal Geometry is quite unusual, and not easy for this armadillo to get a grip on. The various sources provide an unusual form of checks and

balances.

I thought Aardvark did well at pulling together works of “masters of the arts” and suggesting that they be considered to the student’s benefit. No intervention whatsoever is done in historical research, and I do not find that Aardvark attempted to thwart this time-honored axiom. Many conclusions had to be based upon incomplete evidence. The evidence is dependent upon reported observations of others. But these are hallmarks of historical research. Aardvark acknowledges the incomplete evidence and encourages more study in this area. Aardvark reaches conclusions based on probabilities in a logical way.

Conclusions and Generalizations

Aardvark walks the reader from one hypothesis to the next. Aardvark’s style is very narrative, and not in an outlined or itemized fashion. He uses various sources, each of which was used to target the hypotheses from different vantage points. I like how Aardvark arrived at probability-type conclusions and generalizations based on deductive reasoning. Aardvark’s work is historic, non-laboratory research, and expectedly there is no control of variables. I found nothing too broadly stated. Statements were tempered, and one example is the contrast of a “correlation” with a “link.” Another example is the suggestion of further study.

I found the logical analysis to be appropriate, though unusual. Aardvark acknowledges that the facts that cause events are quite frequently multiple and complex, and not single and simple, and he did not oversimplify his conclusions. A lot of evidence was insufficient, but Aardvark had no control over that. He based conclusions on similarities, but I did not find the comparisons superficial and I found no flawed reasoning by analogy. Words and expressions were interpreted and used appropriately. I saw no relevancy problem.

I suspected nothing to have been lifted out of context and used in a biased manner. The syntax was relatively easy to follow. I found the reporting style interesting, a bit flippant, and unusual. I thought that Aardvark was on his “soap-box,” however I believe his soap-box was jam-packed with good facts and argument.

References:

Abraham Lincoln. <http://www.quotesdaddy.com/quote/1174661/abraham-lincoln/a-lawyers-time-and-advice-are-his-stock-in-trade>

Benjamin Franklin. <http://www.quotesdaddy.com/>

“Men With Broken Hearts,” by Hank Williams, Sr. (“Some were paupers some were kings and some were masters of the arts. But in their shame they're all the same these men with broken hearts.”)

Aardvark Bloomingdale. (2009). (Animal handler, Charlie Dean) *Distance learning vs. the dual coding theory*. Critter SLIS Dept at University of North Texas.

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Charlie Dean. Class material and notes from SLIS 5080 Research Methods and Analysis, U.N.T.